

## Message Text

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21

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R 240934Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6850

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 0951

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SW

SUBJECT: PALME SPEECH ON COMMUNISM

1. I CALLED ON MFA SECRETARY GENERAL SVERKER ASTROM FEBRUARY 23 FOR A TOUR D'HORIZON. IN ADDITION TO OUR DISCUSSION OF ANGOLA AND THE BHUTTO VISIT (SEPTELS), I RAISED QUESTION OF PRIME MINISTER PALME'S SPEECH ON COMMUNISM WHICH HE HAD DELIVERED TO SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CLUB FEBRUARY 20. IN THE LONG (20 PAGE) SPEECH, PALME HAD REITERATED THE POSITION HE HAD TAKEN AT HELSINGOR CONFERENCE OF SOCIALIST LEADERS ON QUESTION OF SOCIALIST-COOPERATION WITH THE COMMUNISTS IN POPULAR FRONT GOVERNMENTS, I.E., THAT THE DECISION ON SUCH COOPERATION SHOULD BE LEFT TO THE INDIVIDUAL SOCIALIST PARTY IN THE LIGHT OF ITS OWN CIRCUMSTANCES.

2. I REPEATED TO ASTROM THE CONCERN OF THE USG AT THE POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION OF THE COMMUNISTS IN WESTERN EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS, PARTICULARLY OF NATO MEMBERS. ASTROM REPLIED  
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THAT SWEDISH NEUTRALITY POLICY IS PREDICATED ON THE PRESENT

BALANCE OF POWER IN EUROPE, AND HENCE SWEDISH SECURITY IS DEPENDENT ON THE COHESIVENESS AND FORCE STRUCTURE OF NATO. YET, HE CONTINUED, NEITHER THE USG NOR THE GOS COULD MATERIALLY INFLUENCE HISTORIC DEVELOPMENTS IN ITALY AND FRANCE, AND THE DECISION AS TO COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE BY THE PEOPLES CONCERNED. THEREFORE, HE ASKED, IS IT NOT IN OUR INTEREST TO REFLECT NOW ON WHAT LINE OF ACTION WE SHOULD TAKE IN CASE THE COMMUNISTS SHOULD COME TO POWER IN ONE OR MORE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES SO THAT WE WOULD NOT BE CAUGHT "WITH OUR PANTS DOWN?"

3. I REPLIED THAT I DID NOT BELIEVE THAT COMMUNIST ENTRANCE INTO THE GOVERNMENTS OF WESTERN EUROPE IS FOREORDAINED PARTICULARLY IF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES ARE FULLY COGNIZANT OF THE DANGERS IMPLICIT IN THE FORMATION OF SUCH GOVERNMENTS. WHEN I ASKED ASTROM WHAT HE PROPOSED WE DO IN THE EVENT THE COMMUNISTS DID COME TO POWER IN ITALY, HE WAS UNABLE TO COME UP WITH ANY HELPFUL SUGGESTION, OTHER THAN REITERATING HIS CONVICTION THAT WE SHOULD PREPARE NOW FOR THE WORST, I.E., COMMUNIST ENTRANCE INTO THE GOVERNMENT OF ITALY OR FRANCE, WHICH HE SEEMS TO CONSIDER LIKELY TO HAPPEN.

4. I ALSO OBSERVED THAT WE HAD NOTED THE BRIEF PASSAGE IN PALME'S SPEECH WHICH CONTAINED AN INVIDIOUS REFERENCE TO ALLEGED U.S. SUPPORT OF DICTATORIAL REGIMES IN VIETNAM, CHILE, GREECE, SPAIN AND PORTUGAL. ASTROM REPLIED THAT NO SLIGHT TO THE U.S. HAD BEEN INTENDED, AND PROMISED TO PROMPTLY SEND ME THE AUTHORIZED ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF PALME'S SPEECH. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE THRUST OF THE SPEECH WAS AIMED AT THE USSR AND NOT AT THE US. WHILE I CONCEDED THAT THIS WAS THE CASE, I SAID IT WAS ALL THE MORE REGRETTABLE THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD INCLUDED SUCH A GRATUITIOUS REMARK IN AN OTHERWISE THOUGHTFUL SPEECH. (FULL TEXT OF SPEECH BEING POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT.)  
STRAUSZ-HUPE

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